

SAPC-16980/R
Copy 4 of 5.

2 December 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Trip to Hqs, ARDC, 2 December 1957

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1. I visited with Gen. Demler and Maj. Gerald White at ARDC Headquarters in Baltimore this morning to discuss the J-79 engine, particularly as to its future reliability and regarding its specific fuel consumption compared with the J-57. Additionally we went into various aspects of manufacturers dealing with plastics such as Fiberglas, and touched on the closing of [REDACTED]. I had not planned to discuss Thermos; however, Gen. Demler opened our meeting with a discussion on this subject since he was in receipt of a message from SAC requesting a definite briefing to bring them up to date. I spent five minutes with Gen. Flickinger discussing medical personnel.

2. To amplify each of the above items, I will start with the discussion on Thermos. Apparently several months back Gen. Terrill sent a message to ARDC requesting a large-scale briefing for a considerable number of his command on the Thermos project in order that his various staff and tactical people could be oriented into this particular phenomenon so that they could do planning on both offensive and defensive effects such phenomenon would have on future SAC operations. Apparently there was an exchange of cables to the effect that since certain aspects of Thermos were restricted to need-to-know individuals holding a special security classification, and that if SAC would submit the minimum list of people they deemed essential to get this classified briefing, ARDC would make an effort to clear them and the briefing would be held in two categories: one for all SAC personnel which would be a generalized secret briefing; the other would be for those cleared specifically for Thermos in which they would be given the latest information.

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3. Just before I arrived today, Gen. Demler had received a message from SAC giving their list of names (approximately five) whom they wished Thermos cleared for the special briefing. I volunteered to bring a copy of the message to our Security Officer in order that early action might be taken to clear the people for the forthcoming briefing, which Gen. Terrill requested be held the first or second week of December. I will ask [REDACTED] to let [REDACTED] know when these people are cleared so that he can inform Gen. Demler.

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4. Gen. Demler asked if I would be present at the briefing and I told him no, but that if our Security Office felt it necessary to sit in and hear the briefing we would send a project representative to the meeting. It was decided that [REDACTED] will give the part of the briefing for the specially cleared group. Possibly Gen. Demler will give the general briefing.

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5. With regard to plastics, Gen. Demler said he had talked with his staff member who is best informed on plastic design and manufacture and had found that Marmco is probably one of the most flexible, aggressive and alert to new R & D techniques of all presently known companies. Possibly Zenith, which has been taken over by Minnesota Mining & Mfg., has more production experience; however, they have dropped behind a little in basic research on fabricating techniques and forming, so they would be Gen. Demler's second choice. He said that possibly if Minnesota Mining & Mfg. were aware of an interest by some organization in a definite application such as we may have, they might shake up the Zenith organization, fire a few people and get the show on the road. The Zenith performance on the [REDACTED] project at Fairchild was very poor as you know and Gen. Demler indicated they have fallen so far behind he doubts if they will ever be able to meet their commitments. They can produce but their quality control and technique is poor.

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6. Gen. Demler did not mention any known technique of Omahundro but I would suggest when we go to the West Coast we visit their plant, as well as Marmco and Zenith.

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7. As to [REDACTED] being kept open, Gen. Demler regretted that he had given me wrong information on this. However, today Gen. Canterbury and members of the Training Command at Nellis are having a conference to discuss how best to keep Nellis on a stand-by basis. Apparently Nellis has a requirement to continue a gunnery program on a range adjacent to [REDACTED] so someone has to remain in the area to work on the targets and see that people do not stray into the gunnery area. If this requirement is recognized by all parties at the conference, [REDACTED] will be kept open on a stand-by basis which I understand will include necessary guards, lights, water and telephone service. This should suffice for our needs. However, to be sure there is no slip up, I propose to put in a definite requirement in writing to Col. Geary, stating our needs for the use of [REDACTED] and requesting that such be provided through Headquarters Air Force support.

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8. On the J-79 engine, no one at AFDC had up-to-date information on the anticipated specific fuel consumption on the J-79 approximately a year or a year and a half in the future. Neither did they have a good idea of what the engine reliability would be by that time. They did say the reliability had been improving. Originally the J-79 development program had been programmed and planned for a five-year period so it is only natural that it would not show up too well when first introduced into the 104. Gen. Demler believes with the proper emphasis this engine should eventually be as reliable as the J-57 at the time we started our USCM.

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9. Gen. Demler will get us the best figures available on this from the Lab and General Electric, especially in connection with fuel consumption and engine reliability, and will give us this information in the near future. I told him that in the meantime I would discuss this with Kelly Johnson when I go to L.A. next week. Incidentally, I have a feeling that one thing against the J-79 is the fact that it is a thousand pounds lighter and since it is back of the CP I would guess by taking out this thousand pounds we will still have a problem when we have equipment in the equipment bay of weights and balance. We will probably have to install lead in the tail to offset the thousand pounds of the engine. I am afraid we will be trying to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps when we start changing over from the J-57 to the J-79.

10. I had a few minutes with Gen. Flickinger and asked him whether he needed both [REDACTED]. He said he already had [REDACTED] on board and he had another assignment in which he needed a person with [REDACTED] background. I told him I had discussed his desire to get [REDACTED] who had said he doubted if [REDACTED] could be pried loose from Westover with a low priority. Gen. Flickinger said he had a project coming up with sufficient priority he thought to merit getting [REDACTED] and he will take this up with [REDACTED] in the near future. He asked that we not release [REDACTED] until he gets a chance to talk to [REDACTED] so that [REDACTED] will not get the impression that he is released from his temporary assignment to our headquarters.

11.. In the meeting in Gen. Demler's office there was a Col. C. H. Lewis, Chief of the Aero-Electronics Branch of ARDC. I did not know Col. Lewis was cleared but I remembered him from my Wright Field days. I didn't say anything until I got a chance to ask Gen. Demler if Col. Lewis was cleared. Gen. Demler said yes, that he was fully aware of the Agency participation etc. and I could talk fully in the meeting. With this background I discussed more fully our latest activities and our future efforts for Phase II. After our meeting Maj. White got me to one side and said apparently Gen. Demler was not familiar with the restrictions we place on the follow-on, or Phase II, of the U-2 program and this was apparently why he had brought Col. Lewis into the picture without prior clearance with us. I was caught off base by Gen. Demler's assuring me that Col. Lewis was cleared and thus discussed before him our thinking on our future aircraft.

12. I believe our Security Officer might give some thought as to how we can get in touch with all people Phase II cleared on the follow-on program and inform them that this is a separate project from the normal Aquatone or even [REDACTED] and requires special clearance. In this way perhaps we can hold the circle of witting people down on this newest phase.

[REDACTED]
Deputy Project Director

1-RMB
2-SO/R
3-CFK
4-JAG